

Maiden Wind Farm Draft Environmental Impact Statement Cover Sheet

Responsible Federal Agency: U.S. Department of Energy (DOE), Bonneville Power Administration (BPA)

Responsible Local Agency: Benton County Planning and Building Department

Title of Proposed Project: Maiden Wind Farm

Implementation Dates: Construction is expected to begin in summer 2002; commercial operation is expected to begin in winter 2002-2003.

Washington Winds Inc. (the project developer) proposes to construct and operate up to 494 megawatts (MW) of wind generation on privately- and publicly-owned property in Benton and Yakima Counties, Washington. This Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) evaluates the environmental effects of BPA's Proposed Action to execute power purchase and interconnection agreements for the purpose of acquiring up to 50 average megawatts (aMW) (up to about 200 MW) of the project developer's proposed Maiden Wind Farm. This EIS also evaluates the environmental impacts of the No Action Alternative. BPA's preferred alternative is the Proposed Action. This action requires Conditional Use Permits (CUPs) from Benton and Yakima Counties, as well as other state and federal permits. The project would include integration of energy into BPA's existing transmission system. This EIS satisfies the requirements of both the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the Washington State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA).

The project would be located about 10 miles northeast of Sunnyside in the Rattlesnake Hills and would occupy about 251 acres of land. Except for portions of two sections of land owned by the Washington Department of Natural Resources (DNR), the project would be constructed on privately-owned farm and ranch land in Benton and Yakima Counties. The major facilities of the project include up to 549 wind turbines with small transformers at the base of each turbine tower, underground and overhead collector cables, access roads, up to two substations, up to three operation and maintenance buildings, possibly a 4-mile 230-kilovolt (kV) transmission line, and up to four meteorological towers. During construction, several staging areas and up to two quarries would be developed. Best management practices would be implemented to protect wildlife, limit weeds, erosion, and fire hazard, and ensure public safety, among other purposes.

The project could be developed in several phases. The first phase would consist of 50 aMW in the northwestern portion of the project site. The project developer has requested a CUP for up to 494 MW. Although the full 494 MW of power may or may not be constructed, this EIS evaluates impacts from full build-out of the project.

Comments on the Draft EIS will be accepted until May 15, 2002.

You may access the EIS or find more information about BPA at www.efw.bpa.gov.

For additional information about the EIS, contact:

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